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A SECOND LOOK AT THE AUSTRIAN SITUATION

HON. FRANK J. BRASCO

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, May 11, 1972

Mr. BRASCO. Mr. Speaker, very recently a group of young American Jews were involved in an altercation at the Austrian Embassy in Washington. It seems there was some physical contact involving the Austrian Ambassador to the United States. In the process, a swastika flag was hung from the front of the embassy in question. A message was attached to the flag, asking Americans to refrain from visiting "Nazi Austria."

I certainly deplore the violation of the grounds of the Austrian Embassy. And I hold no brief for those who would lay hands upon any ambassador of a sovereign state with which the United States maintains correct relations. But this incident deserves a little more research, particularly into reasons for such an outburst by young people who are law-breakers in a very different sense of the word than is ordinarily understood by our general public.

Austria is the spiritual home of nazism. Hitler was a native of Linz, Austria. Adolph Eichmann was also a citizen of that country. Austria's very name in the old European lexicon was "Oesterreich," which really means an eastern extension of the "Reich."

The Nazi movement was exceptionally strong from the start in this nation. When "Anschluss" arrived with Germany, cheering mobs of Hitler's sympathizers lined her roads to welcome his armies first, and himself later.

Antisemitism has deep roots in the Austrian consciousness, even, as some might say, in the soul of this small nation. Large numbers of native Austrians not only fought for and served Hitler ardently unto death, but also were involved in many stupefying crimes of the Nazi regime.

Hundreds of thousands of Austrians had more than a nodding acquaintance with the eastern portions of Europe which fell swiftly under Nazi domination at the start of the Second World War. These were singled out, although thousands volunteered cheerily, to administer conquered territories, all of which contained large numbers of Jews.

Austria was a Nazi nation to its last corpse, participating in a thousand ways in what the Hitler regime planned and carried forth across the face of Europe. Many of those tried and executed or imprisoned as a result of the Nuremberg trials were Austrian nationals.

As Nazi hordes spilled over and took control of Eastern Europe, an administrative infrastructure was created everywhere across these conquered territories. Gauleiters, or area governors, were set up, with a complete power structure be-

neath them, charged with exploitation of lands and extermination of undesirables. They were in charge of enforcing laws, producing slave labor in massive quantities and running a variety of activities. Among these were extermination camps, where upward of 6 million innocent Jews were murdered methodically, and toward the close of the war, on an assembly-line basis. Many of the people who staffed scores of death camps were Austrians. Many of those who dealt with the daily administration of mass murder were Austrians.

Hundreds and hundreds of death trains weekly crisscrossed Europe. Many carried Jews to their doom. Others carried loot from across Europe to feed and clothe the Nazi Germany and Austria.

Tens of millions of non-Jewish Europeans were exploited and murdered by this administrative infrastructure, which cooperated fully on a daily basis with the German Army, Gestapo, and SS.

Einsatzgruppen roamed areas behind frontlines, their sole purpose to round up and exterminate Jews, gypsies, and other so-called "undesirables." Many assassins in their ranks were Austrians. In fact, some of the most unspeakable crimes committed on a daily basis in the Second World War upon noncombatants were committed by Austrians.

After the war, an international outcry sought and obtained trial of the worst of these war criminals. Many trials were held across Europe for years, as these men and women were sought out, secured, brought to the bar, and condemned to death or long prison terms. One nation was an exception to this rule of law: Austria.

Her population harbored a massive ratio of members of the Nazi Party. Tens of thousands of war criminals found their way back to Austria, quietly melting back into the mass of the population, secure in the knowledge that few neighbors, if any, would betray them to authorities. Their confidence was well placed, for most such neighbors were in fact sympathizers, if not actual participants in the worst of these deeds. The same was true of the police authorities. The man who arrested Anne Frank and sent her to Belsen was recently discovered as an Austrian policeman.

Over the years a few stout hearts who have never forgotten clamored for Austria to bring some of these butchers to trial. I speak of concentration camp commandants, camp guards, and the like. Some were openly living under their own names, even though they were widely known to be guilty of unspeakable crimes.

At last, in the past year, a few token trials were put on by Austrian authorities. And the entire Western World looked on in disbelief and shock at the result.

At Auschwitz, 3 million Jews were exterminated on an orderly assembly-line basis. Some men who designed and built these extermination facilities were brought to trial and found innocent of any criminal activity.

Austria did not blanch at that. She put on a second trial. The defendant was typical of a certain class of Nazi war criminal, of which there are thousands alive and well today in Austria. This beast was a former Nazi SS officer in the Mauthausen Concentration Camp, a mass murder facility. His name is Johann Gogl, and he acknowledged in open court that in 1944 he commanded a section at this camp called the "Stairway of Death."

According to witness testimony, prisoners were forced to drag 110-pound stones up 186 steep steps of a stone quarry. Those who did not perish on the steps were thrown into an electric fence when they reached the top. Gogl's name, according to testimony, was on the death orders.

Gogl, like the rest of his kind, said he did not know what was being done; that his name was forged. His attorneys produced a petition signed by 268 persons, virtually the entire adult population of his home village of Ottlang, declaring he could not be guilty because he dedicated his life to saving life, a reference to his membership in a mountain rescue unit. How touching.

This, then, is what Austria conceals beneath her smiling facade of mountains, skiing, snow and "gemütlichkeit." Come to happy Austria and vacation with all the jolly old butchers of noncombatants. For they are everywhere in that accursed nation, and the entire world knows it. Austria sees fit to infuriate civilization by staging nonsense trials of the scum of the earth, and then acquits them.

We all know the real story. None of these people will ever be punished for their unspeakable deeds. After all, who were those they murdered? Who cares? And it was so long ago, wasn't it?

Where are the great voices of conscience who plead for even-handedness in the Middle East? I hear them not. I see them not.

I say, let Austria claim her own and hug them to her national bosom. She deserves them. And they deserve her. These young demonstrators who perpetrated the action against the Austrian Embassy did not do a nice thing. They did not do a legal thing. But they certainly did an understandable one.

ESCALATION, AMERICAN OPTIONS, AND PRESIDENT NIXON'S WAR MOVES—PART II

HON. RONALD V. DELLUMS

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, May 11, 1972

Mr. DELLUMS. Mr. Speaker, following is the continuation of study materials on American involvement in Indochina which were first put into the Record on May 10, 1972, and which the Government Printing Office did not have room to print fully.

The rest of the materials follow: